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Letter dated 14 September 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

At the Security Council meeting on Iraq held on 14 September 2004, my delegation delivered a condensed version of our report on behalf of the Multinational Force in Iraq. I have the honour to transmit the full text of the report (see annex).

I would be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) John C. **Danforth**
Representative of the United States of America

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Annex to the letter dated 14 September 2004 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Report by the United States pursuant to Security Council resolution 1546 (2004)

14 September 2004

INTRODUCTION

Mr. President, on behalf of member states contributing forces and other related assistance, I am pleased to report to the Security Council on the efforts and progress of the Multinational Force, as required by Security Council Resolution 1546. Together with our partners who make up the Multinational Force in Iraq, the United States remains committed to a secure, stable, and democratic Iraq at peace with its neighbors. To that end, the Multinational Force and Iraqi security forces continue to work together to provide security for the Iraqi people and to defeat those who seek to de-stabilize Iraq.

When the Security Council adopted Resolution 1546, the establishment of a sovereign Iraqi Government and the transfer of authority to that government were pending. The Security Council laid out the basis for cooperation between the Multinational Force and the Government of Iraq. The Council also acknowledged that international support for the restoration of stability and security in Iraq would be essential to the well-being of the Iraqi people, their ability to elect a new government under a permanent constitution, and the ability of the United Nations and other providers of international assistance to carry out their work on behalf of the people of Iraq.

As you know, the insurgent and terrorist threat to the Iraqi Interim Government remains extremely serious. You are all familiar with daily headlines of hostage-takings and mortar attacks. My presentation today will not avoid recognition of these facts. I will lay out for the Council an overview of the security situation, and an update of MNF activities, including its cooperation with Iraqi authorities since the adoption of Resolution 1546 in June 2004. This presentation is in the context of our deep regret for the loss of life by Iraqis, international civilians, and members of the Multinational Force. But the context is also defined by our dedication to stay the course. The Iraqi Interim Government and the Multinational Force have made security their number one priority.

SECURITY SITUATION

Mr. President, in the two weeks following the transition on June 28, 2004, there was a large drop in significant acts of violence against MNF operations and a period of relative stability. However, since then, attacks perpetrated by insurgents and terrorists against Iraqi civilians, government officials and MNF personnel have increased. These elements have continued to challenge Iraqis and internationals working for a better Iraq. In July, insurgents and terrorists sought to challenge the Iraqi Interim Government through increased attacks against Iraqi government officials, security personnel, civilian workers, and other nationals supporting Iraq's reconstruction in an attempt to destabilize the new government. Insurgent elements sought to assassinate Iraqi Interim Government officials at the national, regional and local levels — and sometimes, tragically, they have been successful. These assassination attempts were intended to undermine the government's authority and the support it received from the Iraqis. But the Iraqi Interim

Government and local authorities around the country have stood firm in the face of this onslaught and committed to keeping the political transition process intact. Indeed, the Iraqi Interim Government's demonstration of resolve in the fight against terror made government officials targets for the insurgents.

During this period, insurgents and terrorists also targeted third-country nationals for kidnapping and publicized execution in an effort to undermine international support for Iraqi reconstruction efforts and the transition to democracy. As they focused more specifically on terrorizing the Iraqi Interim Government and third-country nationals, attacks against the Multinational Force decreased in July, but they increased again in early August as Muqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army resumed its attacks in Najaf, Sadr City, Amarah, and elsewhere in the south. Also during this period, the Multinational Force sought to employ more effective tactics to prevent and thwart attacks, and defeat the anti-coalition fighters with strong support from the Iraqi Interim Government. Efforts to improve the security situation have been bolstered by the strong condemnation of terrorism and kidnapping issued by leading members of the Multinational Force and others in the international community.

THE MNF AND IRAQI SECURITY FORCES

In fulfilling the Security Council's mandate, as reaffirmed under Resolution 1546, "to contribute to the maintenance of security and stability in Iraq," the Multinational Force, comprised of over 30 countries, in addition to the United States, contributing more than 23,000 personnel has conducted the full spectrum of military operations, which range from provision of humanitarian assistance, civil affairs, and relief and reconstruction activities, to detention of those who are threats to security, preventing and deterring terrorism, looking for and securing weapons that threaten Iraq's stability, intelligence gathering, and -- when necessary -- offensive combat operations against insurgents and terrorists. Through these activities, the Multinational Force is seeking to support the Iraqi Government in creating an environment in which peaceful, democratic elections can be held, thus completing the political transition process and enabling further reconstruction and restoration of essential services.

Together the Multinational Force and Iraqi security forces work to conduct broad military operations to promote security, governance, economic development, and communications in support of the Iraqi Interim Government. The Iraqi security forces, in partnership with the Multinational Force, conduct operations to protect key leadership and the political process, and to engage or neutralize insurgents. They are working to build and to support well-trained Iraqi security forces capable of assuming Iraq's security. And, their objective it to make measurable and visible improvements in the quality of life of the Iraqi people. Successful operations will eventually allow Iraqis to assume full responsibility for the security of Iraq.

MNF-IIG SECURITY PARTNERSHIP

Mr. President, following the return of sovereign authority to the Iraqi Interim Government on June 28, 2004, the Multinational Force has built a relationship with the new government on the basis of a full partnership. With the end of the occupation, the Multinational Force and the Iraqi Interim Government work

together daily in a variety of ways to effect a security partnership. This cooperation occurs at all levels – national and local – in Iraq.

At the national level, the U.S. Ambassador and the MNF leadership are invited as appropriate to Iraq's Ministerial Committee on National Security, where the Iraqi leadership discusses and makes recommendations on national security matters to the Iraqi Prime Minister. In addition, the Iraqi Prime Minister, his key ministers, and the Multinational Force have worked closely on all issues of strategic importance and of a sensitive nature. This cooperation extends beyond current operational issues.

The recent challenge to the Iraqi Interim Government's authority in Najaf and the determined response of the government has highlighted the Iraqi leadership and the vital role the Multinational Force plays in support of the Iraqi Government. Under Prime Minister Allawi's leadership, Iraqi security forces, supported by the Multinational Force, enabled a peaceful solution to the recent crisis in Najaf.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF MNF ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS MADE

Mr. President, the Multinational Force has continued to perform or assist in many humanitarian and reconstruction activities throughout Iraq. Soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines assigned to the Multinational Force, as well as civil affairs personnel continue to provide assistance; they do this in coordination with other assistance providers on the ground. The focus of humanitarian and reconstruction activities has been restoration of essential services. That includes the restoration of electricity to homes, public facilities, and business. This is critical for Iraqis to return to normal life. Engineering units have helped restore power to pre-conflict levels in both the North and South of Iraq. Multinational Force units have continued to help to provide security for key infrastructure. For example, British forces, working with the Iraqi National Guard and the Oil Protection Force, provide security for oil related installations.

Multinational Force engineering units repair numerous bridges, ports, roads, and railroads. Multinational Force tactical units construct and repair local schools, hospitals, post offices, and other public buildings throughout Iraq. Multinational Force medical units treat Iraqi civilians throughout the country and assist in children's vaccination programs. Multinational Force explosive ordnance disposal units have disposed of thousands of tons of captured or found Iraqi ammunition, including land mines.

The Multinational Force supports the Iraqi Ministry of Education by ensuring that schools operate freely and without disruption. For example, Civil Affairs officers from the 350th Command coordinated national exam security with the First Calvary Division to ensure minimal threats to the administration, integrity and grading of exams, at the Ministry's request.

Civil affairs personnel work daily to help Iraqis form the basis of civil democratic society. They are active in all eighteen governorates, and are now assisting with elections planning. The full resources of the Multinational Force will be available to assist the Iraqi government and its security forces to provide the necessary security for upcoming January 2005 elections for the constitutional assembly, related events and subsequent elections in 2006.

STATUS OF IRAQI SECURITY FORCES

Resolution 1546 recognizes that the Multinational Force will assist in building the capability of the Iraqi security forces and institutions, through a program of recruitment, training, equipping, mentoring and monitoring. We have created a distinct command to fulfill this responsibility. It is within the Multinational Force and led by U.S. Lieutenant General David Petraeus. This organization directs the development of the Iraqi Ministry of Interior forces, which is predominantly the Iraqi Police Service, and the Iraqi Ministry of Defense forces, which is predominantly the Iraqi Army. Lieutenant General Petraeus works closely with these two Iraqi ministries on training, equipping and operations of Iraqi security forces.

Progress has been achieved in helping to build the Iraqi security forces, but much remains to be done to allow them to play a new role that security forces in Saddam's Iraq did not play. It will take time before they reach full operational capacity and time before they develop the full trust of Iraqis. The Multinational Force will continue to support and sustain this process.

As of September 10, approximately 231,000 Iraqi security forces were either on duty or in training. But numbers are only part of an effective security force. Development of competent leaders is critical and time-consuming. The Multinational Force will help develop leaders and specialists as a priority in the months ahead. Training programs will be key to develop professionalism and facilitate the assumption of full responsibility for security by the Iraqis.

Mr. President, the establishment of a sovereign Iraqi Government has provided an important rallying point for the range of various Iraqi security forces. While the past performance of the Iraqi Police Service and the Iraqi Security Forces was sometimes disappointing, preliminary reports since the transition have been more positive. The Iraqi National Guard especially has performed well, standing and fighting in the face of insurgent activities. The Iraqi Police Force also has improved, performing on the whole far better than was the case last April, although the positions of some local authorities remain tenuous.

Forces falling under the Ministry of Interior, at least at one period of time, include the Iraqi Police Service, the Civil Intervention Force, the Department of Border Enforcement, and the Facilities Protection Service. These services are the lead civilian agencies for maintaining order within Iraq. The Ministry of Interior is responsible for training all law enforcement personnel, and for the Iraqi police and border enforcement operations. The Facilities Protection Service, created under the authority of the Ministry of Interior, now has elements managed by each Ministry requiring facility protection.

Falling under the Ministry of Defense are the Iraqi Army, the Iraqi National Guard, the Intervention Force, the Special Operations Force, the Iraqi Air Force, and the Coastal Defense Force, which I will refer to collectively as the Iraqi Security Forces.

The Iraqi Police Service has continued to grow over time. Over 86,623 police officers are on duty or in training, and components including the civil intervention

force, an emergency response force, and a dignitary protection service are in training. The goal is to have 135,000 Iraqi Police, once training and equipping are complete.

With regard to the Department of Border Enforcement, more than 14,000 border police have been hired, with an ultimate goal of 32,000.

The Facilities Protection Service, charged with protecting Iraq's strategic infrastructure, government buildings and cultural and educational assets, had more than 73,000 personnel by September 10. That said, because Facilities Protection Service personnel are hired and paid by the Iraqi Ministries for which they work, visibility of actual on-duty strength is limited.

Key to the efforts of the various Iraqi security services is the leadership from the top of the Iraqi Government. Prime Minister Allawi has responded strongly to attacks, especially against members of the government. His response has included regular sweeps for terrorist and criminal elements. Iraqis have welcomed these and viewed them as a sign of the Iraqi Interim Government's strength.

SECURITY FOR THE UNITED NATIONS IN IRAQ

Mr. President, Resolution 1546 notes the creation of a distinct entity under the unified command of the Multinational Force with the dedicated mission of providing security for the United Nations in Iraq. The United States remains committed to working with the international community to ensure that the security needs of the United Nations are met, particularly now that the Secretary General's Special Representative Ashraf Qazi and other United Nations personnel are on the ground in Baghdad.

Resolution 1546 endowed the United Nations with a leading role to advise and assist the Iraqis in preparing and holding national elections. The Transitional Administrative Law requires these elections to be no later than January 2005. Let there be no doubt: we are committed to this timetable. Along with the broader international community, we look forward to the United Nations working hand-in-hand with the Iraqis to fulfill this role.

Mr. President, I believe I can speak for all member states in saying that we must do all we can to prevent another attack against the United Nations. The horror of the attack on August 19, 2003 shook the United Nations Secretariat and the international community. However, the answer cannot be disengagement. To this end, the Multinational Force has provided security for the United Nations until now, and the United Nations has deployed staff of up to thirty-five. The United Nations has also joined the United States and the Iraqi Government in soliciting troop and financial contributions for the protection of its staff in Iraq. Unfortunately, the response has not been as rapid as we or the United Nations would like. I strongly urge that member states contribute to the future of Iraq by providing financial assistance and/or troops to provide for security for the United Nations in Iraq. I would underscore the value of this security, especially in allowing the United Nations to deploy electoral assistance staff and others on a timely basis. Time is of the essence — particularly as we look to elections in Iraq in January 2005.

CLOSING

Mr. President, the end of the occupation and the assumption of governing authority by the Iraqi Interim Government on June 28 marked the beginning of a new era for the people of Iraq. As expected, the transfer did not mean an end to insecurity. The Iraqi Interim Government has been repeatedly challenged. However, it has made real progress in establishing its authority. It has found wide support from the public, which has evinced general disapproval for the tactics of insurgents, such as hostage-taking and assassination. The increased violence against Iraqis has, in fact, seemed to provoke a backlash against the insurgents in many areas.

The events of recent months, similar to those in April 2004, demonstrate yet again that there are those who believe that they should decide Iraq's political future through violence. Yet, as my delegation has said in this Council before, only peace and justice, enforced by the rule of law and not the gun, and freedom from fear of terror or a return of former regime elements, will enable all Iraqi citizens to participate fully in political and economic life.

Like others, we look forward to Iraq's national elections in January 2005, a new, permanent constitution and constitutional elections in December 2005. We look forward to the day when Iraqi security forces assume full responsibility for Iraq's security. We look forward to increased United Nations activities, especially in electoral assistance to Iraq. The Multinational Forces remains committed to assisting the Iraqis in creating an environment to make this possible. We, in concert with the Iraqis, will not falter, we will not fail.